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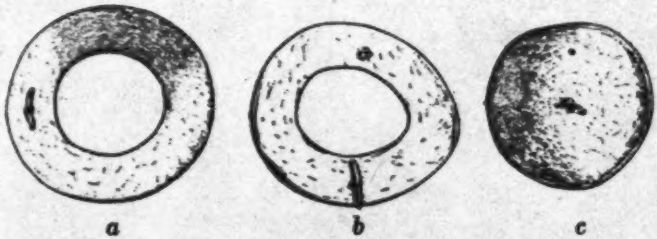
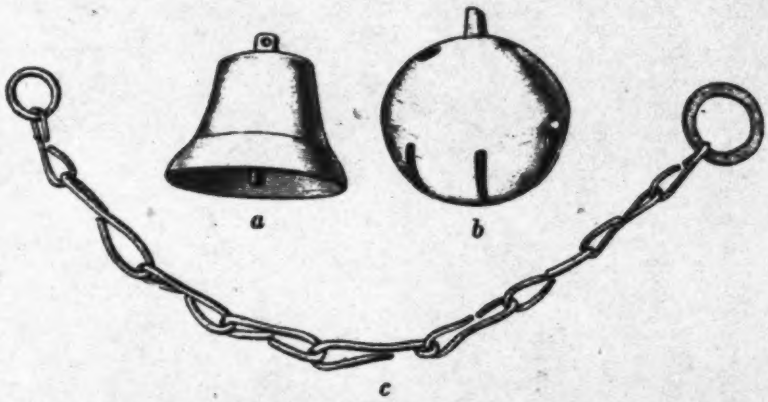


a *b* *c*

Fig. 3 *a–c* (70–9070). Three Iron Discs attached to the Back of the Shaman's Coat shown in Fig. 2. The discs represent the sun and moon which illuminate the shaman's path to the subterranean world and the ice hole for descending to the lower world.



a *b* *c*

Fig. 4 *a–c* (70–9070). Appendages to the Back of the Shaman's Coat (Fig. 2). *a*, A copper bell; *b*, A copper rattle; *c*, An iron chain which is held by the shaman's assistant to prevent the spirits from carrying him off.

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Yakut Province, east of the city of Yakutsk, while one was obtained on the Kolyma River.

The back view of a Yakut shaman's dress, *oyún kirár tañasá* (shaman's rite coat) is shown in Fig. 2. It was bought in the Meginski *ulus* of the Yakutsk District from the Yakut, Slyeptzov, who explained the significance of its different parts. Although Slyeptzov himself, was not a shaman, his explanations do agree generally with the descriptions of Yakut shaman's costumes furnished by other investigators, primarily Pekarsky and Vasilyev.[1] The coat is made of poorly tanned calf hides. During his performance, the shaman wears it next to his naked body. Above the shoulder blades, across the back, is sewn a band of thick bull hide, to which are attached iron and copper pendants and small rattles. Similar bands are sewn on below it, across the entire back.

Under the upper pendants (*kīsan*) on the back of the coat may be seen three iron discs (Fig. 3*a*–*c*). The lower disc (Fig. 3*c*), which has a somewhat spherical concave surface is called, according to Vasilyev, *kūn* (sun). When the shaman descends into the dark lower world during his performance, the *kūn* must light his path. According to my own notes, this disc is called *yi-kūsāña*, i.e., the moon disc, thus representing the moon. The middle disc (Fig. 3*b*), with a somewhat irregular hole, is called *kūn-kūsāñá*, that is, the sun disc. It represents the shaman's sun, which must illuminate his path during his journey to the subterranean world. The upper disc with a hole (Fig. 3*a*) is called *oibón-kūsāñá*. *Oibón*, ice hole, refers to the hole through which the shaman descends to the lower world, the world of evil spirits.

Still another iron disc, called *ān yā doidu*, original earth-mother, is mentioned by Vasilyev. According to the explanation given to him by a shaman the disc represents the earth, which the shaman, when flying on a cloud to the upper worlds, retains as a warrant that he will be returned to the earth. The hole in this disc is also called *oibón*, ice hole; this is somewhat contradictory to the usual meaning of *oibón* as an ice hole through which the shaman descends to the lower world.

All the metallic pendants of the shaman's coat are called *kīsan*, although some have special names. Copper bells, small rattles, and bells in the form of bivalvular shells are called *xobo-kīsan*. The metallic bivalvular shell has not been figured, but these shells may be seen on the

[1] Pekarsky, E. K., The Coat and Drum of the Yakut Shaman: Materials on the Ethnography of Russia, Vol. 1 (*Publications of the Ethnographical Division of the Russian Museum of the Emperor Alexander III*, St. Petersburg, 1910, in Russian); Vasilyev, V. M., Description d'un Costume et d'un Tambourin de Chaman chez des Jakuts (*Publications du Musée d'Anthropologie et d'Ethnographie de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences de St.-Pétersbourg*, vol. 1, part 2, no. 8, pp. 1–47, St.-Pétersbourg, 1910, in Russian).

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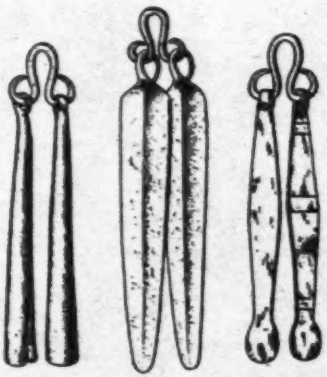
upper part of the back under the collar, together with copper bells and rattles.

Three copper bells like that in Fig. 4*a* are attached to the back of the coat, two on the shoulders, and one under the collar. A copper rattle may be seen in Fig. 4*b*. Fig. 4*c* illustrates the iron chain called *tāsin*, that is, bridle, on the back. It is attached to rings which are sewn to the coat under the armpits. The assistant holds the shaman by this chain to prevent the spirits from carrying him off, when his soul departs for the lower regions or towards heaven.



a *b* *c*

Fig. 5 *a–c* (70–9070). Appendages representing his Bird Spirit on the Back of a Shaman's Coat (Fig. 2). *a*, A pair of conical tubular pendants; *b*, A pair of flat iron plates; *c*, Flat iron pendants of another type.

A pair of pendants in the shape of conical hollow iron tubes called *coñdoi kīsan* is illustrated in Fig. 5*a*. Fig. 5*b* shows another pair of pendants made of flat lancet-like iron plates, called *cilliritkīsan* and representing the feathers of the bird which appears as the shaman's spirit. A pair of another type of flat iron pendants represents bird feathers (Fig. 5*c*).

An elongated iron strap (Fig. 6*b*) attached to the upper part of the sleeve at the back, between the shoulder and elbow, is called *tabūtal timira*, that is, upper-arm-iron. It should be noted that *tabūtal* means the humerus of birds. The shorter iron strap (Fig. 6*a*), sewn to the sleeve between the elbow and wrist, is called *zari-timira* (*zari*, human forearm

a

b

Fig. 6 *ab* (70–9070). Two Iron Bands attached to the Back of the Sleeves of a Shaman's Coat (Fig. 2). *a*, Represents the forearm bone; *b*, Represents the upper arm.

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bones). The iron band representing the upper arm is called a bird's humerus, while the representation of the bones of the forearm is called after the corresponding human bones. However, for the plate representing the upper arm, Pekarsky and Vasilyev give another term, *akīmal*, which really means human humerus. Vasilyev states that one shaman did not call the lower plate representing the forearm, *tari*, that is, human forearm bones, but *zotohoi*, bird's stroke feathers. If these pendants on the sleeves represent parts of the skeleton of a deceased shaman, it is interesting to note the confusion of bird and human bones. I agree, however, with Vasilyev that no contradiction is involved in such confusion. If we assume that the Yakut shamanistic coat, like that of the Yukaghir, represents a bird's skin, with the help of which the shaman is transformed into a bird, then, at the moment of transformation, he is a bird-man. He is supposed to rise to the upper world by means of his coat, whereas he descends to the lower world through the ice-hole disc previously mentioned. On the other hand, some Yakut gave different interpretations for the iron pendants. These were said to serve as a kind of armor in a contest with hostile shamans and spirits. Slyeptzov, a Yakut, gave me a similar explanation of two iron plates sewn on in place of the shoulder blades and called *sarīn-timira*, that is, shoulder irons. These iron shoulder blades were said to protect the shaman in conflicts with more powerful shamans.

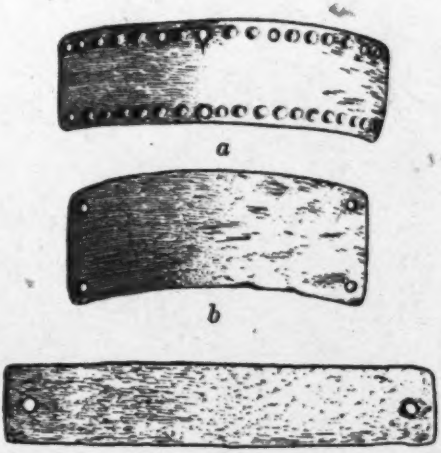

Fig. 7 *abc* (70–9070). Appendages to the Shaman's Coat (Fig. 2). These are transverse bent iron plates attached at the bend of the elbow and at the edge of the sleeves and represent the elbow joint and the wrist (*a*, *b*) and one of the ribs of the shaman's spirit (*c*).

On the sleeves, at the top, are transverse bent iron plates (Fig. 7*a*–*b*), one at the bend of the elbow, the other at the edge of the sleeve. These represent the elbow joint and the wrist. Below the elbows, on both sides of the coat, we find seven iron plates running parallel to each other. Four are sewn on at the right side, as may be seen in Fig. 2.

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It appears that the end of one plate has loosened and hangs on one strap. On the left side, are only three plates. All seven plates are called *oyohos-timir*, that is, iron ribs. On a Yukaghir shaman's coat we found fourteen ribs (*nugored-amunpe*, that is, side bones),[1] seven on each side. We have no explanation for the seven ribs represented on the Yakut shaman's coat. On the coat described by Vasilyev and Pekarsky,[2] only seven ribs were represented.

Fig. 8 *ab* (70-9070). *a*, A Bent Iron Disc on the Shaman's Coat (Fig. 2) representing the Dim Moon illuminating the Lower World; *b*, A Representation of the Shaman's Seat on which he ascends to the Upper World and descends to the Lower World.

Fig. 7*c* represents one of the ribs.

Fig. 8*a* shows a half-circle called *kāltāhāi yi* (that is, half moon), made of a bent iron disc, with cracked edges. Such a dim moon illuminated the lower world. A quite massive irregular iron circle (Fig. 8*b*), somewhat convex on the obverse and concave on the reverse, called *kūsāñā*, represents the shaman's seat (*oyūn oloho*), on which he ascends to the upper worlds and descends to the lower worlds when performing shamanistic rites, in accordance with the requirements of the moment. On the convex side are three engraved figures: two birds and a land animal. Some authors translate the word *kūsāñā* as sun (instead of *kūn*). The birds are probably ravens and the animal represents a wolf. Attached to the central loop are two iron pendants representing the sun's tail (*kūsāñā kuturuga*); one (a ring and a hook) is called *balyk kȳsān* (fish-like pendant); the other (an elongated link), *kōndōi kȳsān* (hollowed tube).

The pendant illustrated in Fig. 9*a* is called *bālānjik*, which means, the edge of the sleeve. There is one such iron piece for each sleeve, each representing the shaman's hand with five iron fingers "strong and clinging like iron." Some *bālānjiks* have six fingers to show that the shaman

[1] See Jochelson, Yukaghir, 178.
[2] Pekarsky, and Vasilyev, *ibid.*

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is not like an ordinary man, but has much more power. Another pendant (Fig. 9*b*) is called *xopto*, gull, and represents one of the upper spirits related to the *irär ämägät* (see below).

We turn now to the front of the Yakut shaman's coat (Fig. 10). Two iron pieces (Fig. 11*c–d*) fastened to the coat under the chin, on the breast piece, represent the clavicles. Unfortunately I do not find their

Fig. 9 *ab* (70-9070). Pendants on the Shaman's Coat (Fig. 2). *a*, Represents the shaman's hand with five iron fingers; *b*, Represents a gull, one of the upper spirits.

Fig. 10 (70-9070). The Front of a Shaman's Ceremonial Coat (see Fig. 2).

Yakut name in my records. Fig. 11*f* shows one of the copper circles on the breast piece of the coat (see Fig. 10). These are called *oyün ömiyin kärätä*, shaman's breast nipples. Fig. 11*e* is called *jäs ämägät*, copper representation of the head of the *yörs*, i.e., of souls of the departed, who fly over the earth and distribute diseases that people may bestow offerings on them and thus be released from pain. In addition to the *jäs ämägät*, on some shamans' coats, is another copper man-figure called *külär ämägät*, the laughing spirit, or *irär-ämägät*, the raving spirit. It represents one of the upper evil spirits, which causes madness. A

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stork (*kytalyk*) spirit made of an iron plate is represented in Fig. 11*b*. Fig. 11*a* represents a grebe (*kushas*) spirit. One of the spirits of the upper world, related to the *irär-ämägät* (raving spirit causing madness) is in the shape of a grebe, stork, or gull (*xopto*). All three bird spirits appear as assistants and executors of the shaman's orders. To extract from the

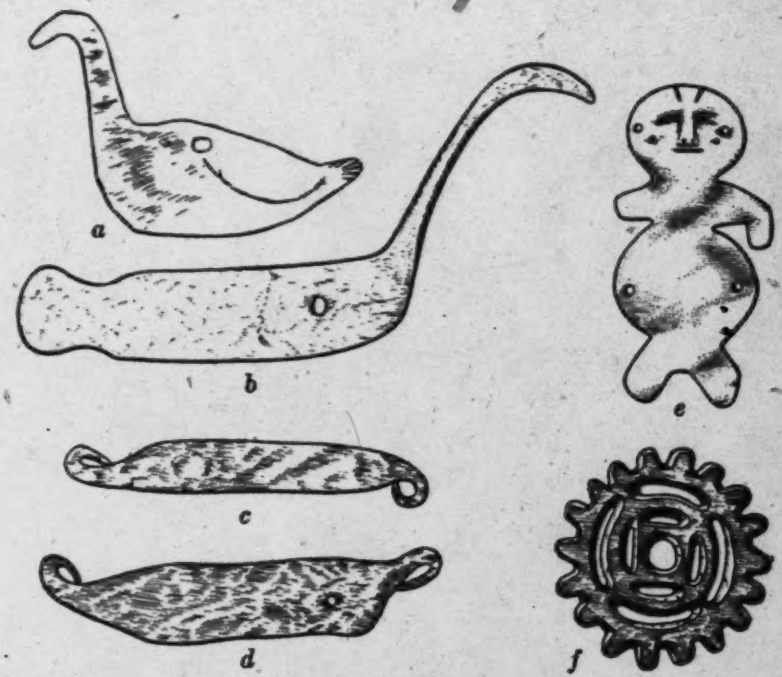

Fig. 11 *a–f* (70–9070). Ornaments on the Front of the Shaman's Coat shown in Fig. 10. *a*, Representation of a grebe spirit; *b*, Representation of a stork spirit; *c–d*, Two pieces of iron representing the clavicles, fastened to the coat under the chin; *e*, Copper representation of the head of the souls of the departed; *f*, One of two copper discs representing the shaman's breast nipples.

body of a patient the spirit causing the illness the Yakut shaman pecks the ailing part with the beak of the iron grebe attached to his ceremonial coat.

There are many other copper or iron figures on the shaman's garb which are not on the costume described; for instance, the *yt* (dog), a flat iron figure representing a dog, is one of the shaman's assistant-spirits, which bites and gnaws the shaman's enemies or their relatives. To be

a *b*

Fig. 12 (70-8861). Front and Back of a Typical Shaman's Coat.

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released from the illness caused by the dog spirit it is necessary to appeal to its shaman master.

The front of the Yakut shaman's coat (Fig. 10) has no special breast piece. Between the left side of the coat and the breast is a seam, but, in my opinion, the front piece is not the remainder of an apron which characterizes Tungus or Yukaghir clothing. It is simply a piece of skin attached to eke out the scantiness of the material. However, the coat is not fastened along a median line at the front as it ought to be, but nearer to the right hand, and thus the breast piece looks like a chest protector.

The front of a Yakut shaman's dress of genuine cut is shown in Fig. 12*a*. There is no breast piece at all. The front borders are held together by tying strings. There are two *jās āmāgāt* (see Fig. 11*e*), and six iron spear points, which the shaman uses in fighting evil spirits. A bent piece of iron below the neck is regarded as a chest protector. The back of the same coat may be seen in Fig. 12*b*. The two iron discs represent the sun and moon. The flat and the hollow iron pendants, the bivalve decorations, and the bands representing the humerus and forearm have already been discussed.

Two triangular figures near the shoulders represent the shaman's shoulder blades, called *sarīn-timirā*, that is, shoulder-irons, and two triangular iron plates below the waist represent his pelvic bones.[1] It must be remembered that the iron plates which represent human bones form the shaman's skeleton. On this coat the representation of ribs and the bridle by which the assistant holds the shaman to prevent the spirits from carrying him off are missing.

For comparative purposes reference should be made to a photograph of a Yakut shaman which I took on the Kolyma River in 1895.[2] Here a separate apron may be clearly seen under the straps on the edge of the coat. But the coat is not Yakut. The representation of shamanistic birds on the apron recalls the aprons of Yukaghir shamans. On each side of the coat we find seven ribs.

Fig. 13 represents the back of a Yakut shaman's dress which I secured on the Kolyma River, at Rodchevo Village not far from Verkhne Kolymsk. This dress has an absolutely different pattern which I have not encountered elsewhere and which does not tally with any of the descriptions in the literature of Yakut shamanism. The peculiarities of the pattern and the absence of the metallic pendants so characteristic of Yakut shamanistic costume, may be explained in part by Tungus

[1] Another informant called the triangles below the discs *opun-sulus*, that is, shaman's stars.
[2] See Jochelson, Yukaghir, Plate IX, Fig. 1.

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influence, and to some extent by the high cost and difficulty of securing iron and copper in the northern sections of Yakut Province. The coat is made of dressed reindeer hide, instead of the calf hide usually employed by the Yakut. The skirt of the coat is not sewn to the upper half, but is buckled to the latter under the fringe at the belt, so that the garment may be lengthened or shortened to fit the shaman. The sleeves are not

Fig. 13

Fig. 14

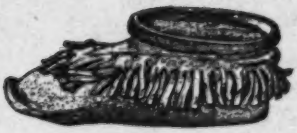

Fig. 15

Fig. 13 (70-8529). Back View of a Shaman's Coat worn by Yakut of the Kolyma River.

Fig. 14 (70-8530). Headdress of the Kolyma Yakut Shaman.

Fig. 15 (70-8531b). Footgear of the Kolyma Yakut Shaman.

in one piece, but consist of longitudinal strips of hide sewn to the shoulders and to the leather rings at the elbow and wrist. This coat is not worn over the naked body, but over the ordinary dress. The pendants, *kīsan*, on the coat consist of tassels strung with beads and of copper tubes with copper discs sewn to their ends. On the back a longitudinal tasseled strip ending in a tail represents the vertebræ, *tonohos*. The tail consists of an iron arrow with iron pendants at the sides, called *jil kīsan*.

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The fringe around the coat represents feathers. In front of the coat is visible the apron, which is sewn to the left border as a chest protector and tied to the right with straps. This is not put on separately, as among the Tungus and Yukaghir. In this respect the arrangement of the apron is like that described by Vasilyev and Pekarsky for a Yakut shaman's coat. The dress itself is not decorated with the iron figures characteristic of Yakut shamanistic coats. Instead, tin discs hang from the edge of the inner side of the drum which belongs to the costume. These discs replaced the ice-hole-disc (*oibón-kūsdñá*) and sun-disc (*kūn-kūsdñá*), which are usually sewn to the back of the coat. Inside the drum were also tin representations of birds; a stork (*kilalik*), and two varieties of wood-cocks called *čōkčōño* and *kurrikači*. Representations of birds were placed on the apron and on those coats of Yakut shamans which had chest protectors.

Fig. 14 represents the headdress, belonging to the shaman's dress, illustrated in Fig. 13. It consists of a wire ring decorated with a reindeer skin fringe. The fringe hat is characteristic of the Yukaghir and Tungus shamans. The Yakut shamans either dispense with a hat altogether, letting their long hair hang loosely over the face, or they wear women's caps. The leather footgear of the shaman is illustrated in Fig. 15.

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Not all Yakut shamans wear a special dress during their shamanistic performances, some perform without a special costume and even without a drum. On the Kolyma River, I met such a shaman, named Konon. He was blind. Konon was often called in to cure the sick and was regarded as a powerful shaman. But he told me himself that he did not have the main *āmāgāt* (shaman's spirit). For a shaman's coat he substituted a woman's coat, *sañiyax*, while instead of a drum, he used as a horse for his journey to the subterranean world a willow (*jalbyr*) with three branches, to which were tied hair from the tail of a white horse.[1] He wore a woman's cap made of ermine skins. Before the shamanistic performance, the assistant bound the shaman's chest and shoulder with a strap, *tāsin*, the end of which he held from behind, while the performance was in progress.

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The Shaman's Drum. The Yakut shaman's drum (*dūñūr* or *tūñūr*) is covered with a hide from a young bull (Fig. 16). It is oval in shape. Its longitudinal diameter is 53 cm.; the width of the rim, 11 cm. There are twelve protuberances or elevations representing horns, which serve as resonators, but also have a symbolic significance. According to a Yakut shaman from the Rodchevo settlement on the Kolyma River, who had

[1] See Jochelson, Yukaghir, Plate X, Fig. 1.

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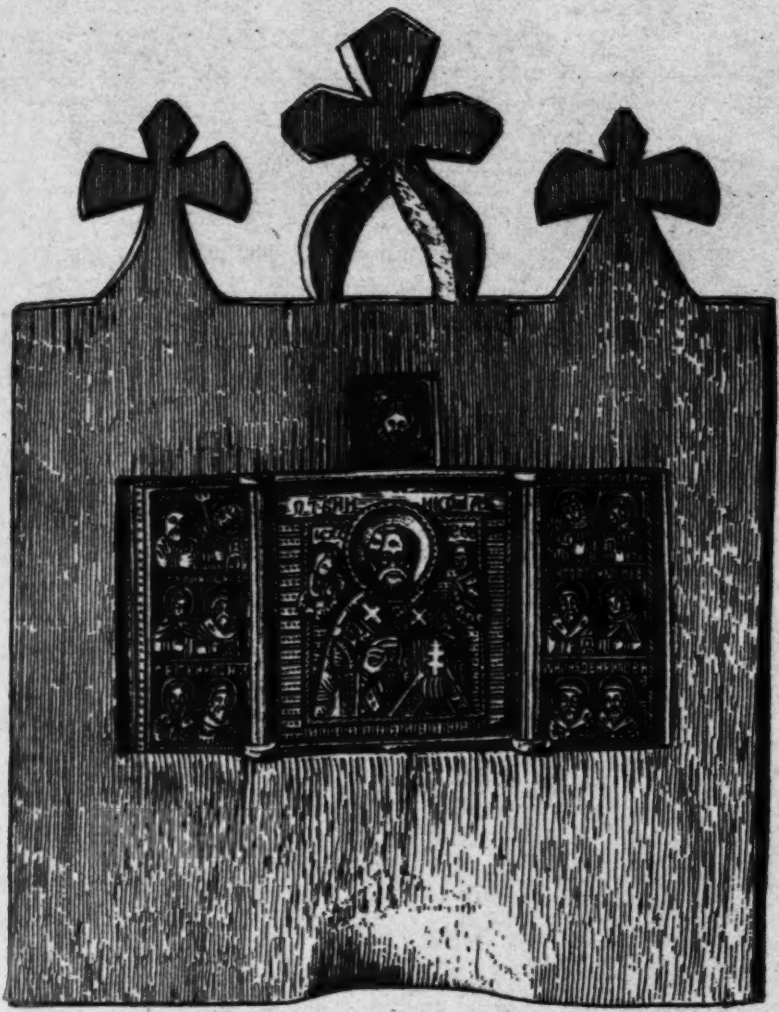

Fig. 20 (70-8662). Brass Representation of Saints, forming Part of the Furnishings of a Yakut Hut.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

comfortable, has a window above it, and is within the range of the cold wind from the open entrance door. During a wedding it is occupied by the owners of the house and their nearest relatives; here also are seated honored guests when the *billirik* is already occupied. The *billirik* and the *bastyñ uña oron* form the "venerable corner." There a table stands, over which, under the ceiling, is a small carved and decorated shelf, called *holloruk*, on which are icons and images of saints painted on boards, to which wax candles, decorated with ribbons, beads, and other pendants, are affixed; or an embellished oil lamp is hung in front of the images. There on Sundays and holidays, headed by the hosts, the inmates and guests gather for prayer, so that this corner is transformed into a kind of chapel. During the prayers, the people stand in front or at the rear of the group, in accordance with their age and position in the community. They bow, cross themselves, hold lighted candles, and burn incense. In Fig. 20 may be seen a brass picture of saints fastened to a board surmounted by crosses. The ancient name of the *bastyñ uña oron* was *kŏhūl olox*.

No. 5, the bank opposite the fireplace (No. 9) called *kătăharin*, is the family sleeping place above which there is no window.

No. 6, *kănčiără olox*, is also called *xañas billirik* (left *billirik*) where adult girls (daughters and relatives) sit, work, and sleep. *Kănčiăra-jon* means young people in general.

No. 7 is called *xañas oron*. It serves as a sleeping place for female laborers or servants and grown children of both sexes. On this bank, hidden by a curtain, the bride sits during the three days' wedding festivities.

No. 8 is called *isit oron* (bank for cooking and other household vessels, from *isit*, kitchen ware).

Over Nos. 7 and 8 is usually a shelf called *dolbūr*.

All the banks beyond the *kătăhărīn* are regarded as belonging to the women of the dwelling. When facing the entrance, inside, the male half of the house is to the right and the female half to the left. The *kătăhărīn* (No. 5) or the family sleeping place and all the banks of the female half are supplied with calico (in former times, leather) curtains which are let down during the night.

From the Russians the Yakut adopted the use of tables and tabourets. Illustrations of models of such furniture may be seen in Fig. 21. The table is usually much lower than our tables and the tabouret is as high as the table. The table with refreshments on it is placed before guests sitting on the banks (*oron*) described above. The Yakut name for

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sasyltumsa, meaning fox's nose. On the left side of the coat is attached the strike-a-light (*xatat*) (see Fig. 36) with a leather bag for tinder (*kyalyk*); the cover of the pocket is decorated with a silver ornament. Also attached to the coat are the *iskax*, small pincers with which women pull out their pubic hair, and *sabaska*, a little wooden calendar. In addition to the silver pendants and bead decorations the coat is embroidered in silk. All the pendants on the left side of the coat are called *ottuk simaha*.

Fig. 36 (70-8633). Steel for making Fire.

The back of a rich woman's *sanayax*, black cloth decorated with silver embroidery, is illustrated in Fig. 37. The collar and skirt are covered with the valuable sea otter fur. The border of the skirt and its slit are trimmed with lynx. The silver embroidery, is, I believe, not original with the Yakut but is an adaptation from Russian art.

Some additional women's *sanayaxes* in the Museum collection merit description. A decorated coat of a foalskin with the hair on has a skirt trimmed with lynx. Above the trimming is a checker work strip made of alternate black and white squares, the white of horse legs and the black of horse and cowskins. On the back is appliquéd a figure made of lynx and *tarbagan* (a kind of marmot—*arctomys* spec.) skins. This, called *kybytya*, means a wedge, but the figure is in the form of outstretched wings (Fig. 38) and, according to the Yakut, symbolizes the shoulder blades and has a magical significance.

Fig. 37 (70-9068). Back of a Highly Ornamented Coat, the Type worn by Rich Women. The decorative motives are embroidered in silver thread.

The preference for *tarbagan* as coat material, says Sierosevski,[1] originated evidently in their former abode in southern Siberia. In their present territory *tarbagan* is lacking. But Baron Toll[2] saw this animal to the north of the Verkhoyansk Mountain Ridge as did the writer in various parts of Yakutsk Province.

[1] Sierosevski, *ibid.*, 335.
[2] Toll, E., *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Russische Reiches*, 100.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

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172 212 On the route followed by the Yakut during their northward migration have been discovered many *pisanitzy*, or prehistoric pictographs, on rocks. Thus P. P. Khoroshikh in a description of the *pisanitzy* in the Irkutsk country published in 1924[1] illustrates two kinds of writing represented by conventional and realistic figures. Some of the conventional signs are regarded as old Turkic or as the so-called Uigur letters. The realistic figures represent men and animals (horses, reindeer, elk, goats, bulls, and birds). Some archaeologists relate these rock drawings and engravings to magical practices, but it seems unlikely that figures drawn or engraved with such great feeling for form were produced by the artists for any other reason than the mere love of the task.

• 532 The carvings of the modern Yakut, however, lack all artistic merit and can in no way be compared, for instance, with those of their eastern neighbors, the Koryak, whose sculpture in miniature not only surpasses the art of the European cave dwellers, but of the modern Eskimo. The vivacity and artistic execution of some Koryak carvings is remarkable. The characteristic posture and movements of animals are rendered with such realism as to produce a vivid image in the mind of the spectator and testify to the great skill and æsthetic taste of the artist.[2] On the other hand, the human and animal carvings of the Yakut are rigid figures bearing only scant resemblance to their originals. Their artists appear incapable of endowing them with life and motion, as in the ivory carving (Fig. 82) representing a man on snowshoes. The next two examples are somewhat better executed (Fig. 83*a*–*b*). Fig. 83*a* represents a carving in one piece of a wooden oil lamp on a wooden stand at the base of which are carved a horse sitting on its haunches and a cow standing. Fig. 83*b* represents a saddled horse. Both these carvings were made by a Yakut near Yakutsk who may have been influenced by objects of Russian art. The oil lamp in Fig. 83*a* (*mas ysyrnyk*,[3] wooden oil lamp) is made of hard birch root; the horse of softer wood. As to the horse, it is interesting to note that a bridle is not indicated and that the saddle has no girths; the whole appears to be an unfinished piece of work. On the other hand, the animal carvings show a certain liberalism on the part of the artist. [789] To depict human and animal forms is regarded as a sin, since it is feared that any biomorphic representations may be transformed into harmful

[1] Khoroshikh, P. P., Investigations of the Stone and Iron Ages of the Irkutsk Country (*Bulletin of the Biological-Geographical Institute of Irkutsk University*, Part 1, Irkutsk, 1924, in Russian).
[2] See Jochelson, Koryak, 654.
[3] *Ysyrnyk* is the Russian word *ukpynyk*.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

spirits. Even representations of the horse, which is regarded as a benevolent being and almost worshiped, are avoided. Only the shaman's dress may be decorated with figures of men and animals which represent his guardians and benevolent and evil spirits (pp. 107–118).

Fig. 82 (70-9367). An Ivory Carving depicting a Man on Snowshoes.

Fig. 83 (70-8799, 8916). Wood Carvings representing a Lamp on a Stand and a Saddled Horse.

Professor Boas has called attention to the difference between the realistic decoration of ceremonial objects and the geometrical designs on those in common use among the Indians and Eskimo.[1] This differentiation is applicable to Yakut art.

[1]Boas, Franz, The Decorative Art of the North American Indian (*Popular Science Monthly*, vol. 63, pp. 481–496, 1903).

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

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We present here some additional examples of Yakut carving in the Museum collection to show the crudity and rigidity of the execution of human and animal figures in bone or mammoth tusks despite the fact that the carvings were made by Yakut living near Yakutsk in imitation of Russian carvings and to meet the demands of Russians.

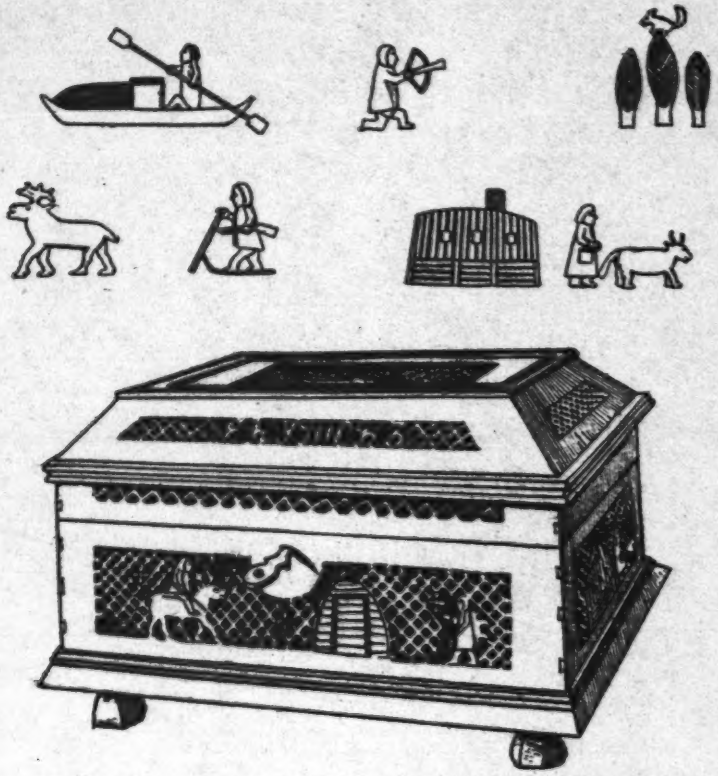

Fig. 84 (70-9382). A Mammoth Ivory Box with Filigree Carving and some Details of the Figures carved on the Opposite Side.

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A box of mammoth ivory ornamented in filigree is shown in Fig. 84. On the front is depicted a Tungus riding a reindeer, a conical tent with its entrance door, and a hunter afoot carrying his staff and a dead fox on his back. Fig. 84 reproduces the figures carved on the other three sides of the box: a man paddling a boat with a covered place for passengers; an elk; a hunter on snowshoes carrying a staff and

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

Figs. 93*a–c* are called *tarāx oyū*, that is, comb ornament, and represent combs. 415 531

Figs. 93*d–e*, are called *ilim xaraha oyū*, that is, net's eyes ornament. They represent fish nets. The dots in Fig. 93*e* stand, most probably, for fish caught.

Figs. 93*f–g*, are called *āriyā oyū*, that is, wound ornament (from the verb *ārii*, to wind). They represent the weaving of baskets by winding thread around bunches of grass. The same rope-pattern on the birch-bark bucket, Fig. 99, which was made by winding horsehair thread round the hoop of the bucket, is called *āriyā tigi*, which means "twisted sewing."

Figs. 93*h–j* are called *urasa oyū*, that is, tent ornament. These zigzag patterns represent the large conical birchbark summer tents of the Yakut. The same pattern embroidered in thread or sinew on skin bags is called *urasaly tigī*, that is, tent embroidery.

Fig. 93*n* is called *kybytya oyū*, that is, wedge ornament (from the verb *kybyt*, to force in), and represents a wooden wedge for splitting wood.

Fig. 93*v* is called *timāx tōrdō oyū*, which means button-base ornament. This pattern, consisting of a series of three or four inscribed diamonds, used to be embroidered on the old-time clothing of the Yakut, at the places where the buttons were sewed on.

Fig. 93*w* is called *kārdis oyū*, that is, notched ornament, and represents the primitive Yakut writing by means of notches on sticks.

Figs. 93*b'–c'* are called *kohuor oyū*, that is, kumiss skin bag ornament, and represent large hide kumiss vessels.

It is of interest to note that all the patterns so far mentioned are of a purely decorative character, have no connection with religious ideas, and consist not alone of the simple units but of their highly harmonious and extremely symmetrical repetition.

Neither in the engraving and carving on the wooden kumiss vessels, nor in the embroidery on the leather and birchbark containers, do we find any realistic representation of animals or objects. Realistic art was evidently unknown in the past. The old-time Yakut considered it a sin for any one except shamans to carve human figures from wood. The shamans carve these figures roughly of wood, to represent guardians or evil spirits, for use in religious ceremonies, and they are not regarded as harmless to ordinary folk. I saw figures of cows and horses carved from wood or birchbark, to be used by children as playthings, but there were never any dolls. Some Yakut, living not far from the Russian town of Yakutsk, carve, among other things, human figures from ivory; but I consider this to be a rather inartistic imitation of the carvings of the neighboring tribes. 532● 787 [177]

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

consider this to be a rather inartistic imitation of the carvings of the neighboring tribes.

The only attempt at realistic reproduction in the ornamentation of kumiss vessels is to be found in the carving of horses' hoofs. Thus the bases of the tripod goblets (Fig. 90) are often carved in the shape of horses' hoofs. The mouthpiece of the kumiss churning vessel often has the form of a horse's hoof (Fig. 95*b*). The base of a wooden stand for a

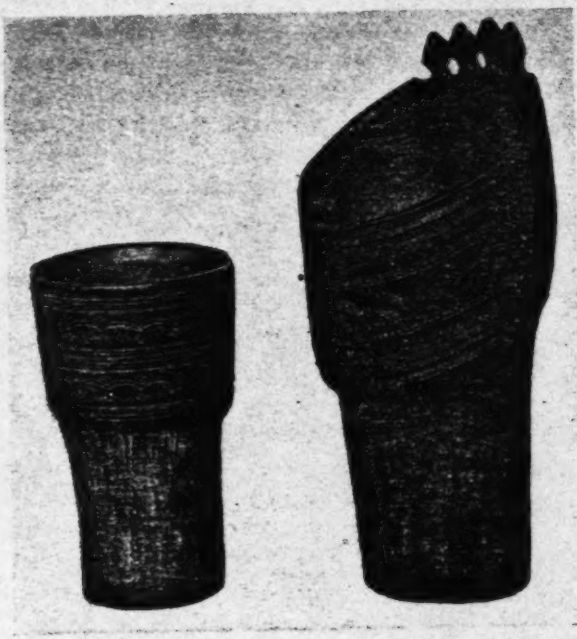

Fig. 95 *a* (70-9067), *b* (70-9266). Two Wooden Funnels for Kumiss Churns.

leather kumiss churn is also in the form of horses' hoofs (see Fig. 96). Even in conventionalized form we do not find the representation of an animal or human figure, not even that of a horse, which forms an object of their animal cult; but, judging from the Yakut names, we do meet with conventionalized representations of parts of the human body.

Thus Fig. 93*l* is called *tonohos oyū*, that is, vertebral ornament, and represents the spine or neck vertebra.

Fig. 93*o* is called *tyñyrax oyū*, which means nail ornament and represents human nails. Fig. 93*p*, is called *Tarbax oyū* which is finger

14: Krauss--172-173 E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut -1-2
116, 292, 756, 301, 532

Now I should like to describe the ornaments of the shaman dress. On the front part of the kuma, from the throat down to the lower edge, three storks are represented (kytaly); this is the symbol of the flying up of the shaman. The ember-goose (kogas), too, is a symbol for the same thing.

On the heart there are three little figures of devils (emjagjal, abasy), the symbol of the permanent presence of the demon in the heart, furthermore two representations of the iron heart of the devil (sjurachtimirja).

On the collarbones there are two iron stripes, which are supposed to be a representation exactly of the collarbones (chamargan-timirja).

Tjargjan-berja, a representation of the devils' eyes.

Ojgos-belgjunja, two hip-bones (in the sides).

Ojgos-umochtar, four devils' ribs from each side.

An octagonal figure with seven holes, stitched in the throat region. The shamans refuse to give any information as to this item, saying that nobody would dare to pronounce their names, and to explain their significance. [173]

On the sleeves; two shoulder-blades (bjulgjul-timirja).

Two ulnas (akymal-chapgaga).

Arm joints, two small bones (begalcach-sjusiega).

Two cartilages of the palm of the hand (akymal-uljuga).

Two bones, representing bird wings (tabytal-timirja).

The fringes on the sleeves mean vulture wings (elie).

On the back: a piece of a seal tail, round children's rattles (abasy-semjaga), all devils ornaments indispensable for a trip to the lower world.

Abasy-balyga, a devil's fish.

Kjular-kjusjanat, the cheerful, gay devil sun; thereon two points of arrows, balyk-kygana, and kandej-sysana, designating the tail of the sun (kjugjan-kuturuka).

Ojbon-timirja, the iron abyss, where the ember-goose hides after having swallowed the shaman. A little bit below, a claw is fixed on this iron, from which the ember-goose will quench his thirst.

Chatat-timirja, the devil's lighter.

Batyrys, a fringe on the tail of the garment.

Two iron arrow points shaped like elk's horns, the significance of which is not certain.

14: Krauss--176 [3] E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut
116, 756, 766, 532, 177

When a male or female shaman dies, the corpse is wrapped up in a kuma and put in a piece of wood. At the head a wooden image is put which is supposed to represent a falcon; at the feet a cuckoo, and at either hip an idol which is to indicate that the spirits carry the soul of the shaman away into their realm. The shaman's corpse is not buried, but exposed on high posts at a free place, or on a tree. Such a place is called chorcach.

I succeeded in finding such a grave in the northern part of Verchojan, and in getting hold of iron parts of the decomposed kuma. As a rule the defunct gets his best garment, sometimes also some furs and a cap. A pipe and a tobacco-pouch is put in his hands; at his feet he has a wooden dish with a meal. In some of the graves I found several iron tools which the defunct had used in manufacturing chamois leather out of deer skin; furthermore bows with arrows, and spears for bear-hunting. According to Pripuzov's statements, the Christian funeral custom is beginning to become familiar also with the shamans.

16: Great Britain Admiralty -- 165- 166 G-3 (no date) 1920 Yakut
116, 237, 439, 532

"They carve figures of human beings which they fashion out of mammoth-tusks: but these are rigid and lifeless, with only an outward resemblance to what they represent, and much inferior to those of the Koryaks. Even these [166] specimens of their plastic art are rare and merely made for commercial purposes, to sell to the Russians. They take no pleasure in them themselves."

On the way home from the burial bunches of wood were kindled on the way; and the defunct's relatives jump across the flames in order to make themselves clean and free from the evil spirit who might have penetrated their clothes during the period of inevitable intercourse with their sick companion. Fire or the demon of fire, An-darchan-toen, or Al-ɔt-iccitja is the protector of the homes and of all persons living under one roof. Fire makes everything clean, it affords warmth, it helps prepare food. The god of fire dwells over the stove, and has the appearance of an old dwarf with a white beard. When preparing a meal it is advisable to throw the first bit of it into the stove. The evil spirit is afraid of the fire; therefore, when the dead man's relatives jump across the fire they leave the evil spirit behind. When they are back, they commemorate the defunct, or rather they treat each other in his honor with meat, salomata, tea, and liquor. In former times they also used to carve a commemorative wooden figure, two or three sixteenths of a yard high, and to decorate them with hides and glass pearls. While this representation was to recall the dead man, it is also supposed to be the spirit who protects the soul of the defunct and the latter himself in the other world. This puppet, however, was not kept in the yurta, but in the choton (Yakut word for cattle pen) or even in a hollow tree, where it was supplied with some bits of good food, and its mouth was smeared with cow's butter or trainoil, to feed him and to secure his protective spirit's aid. But time which destroys everything removed also this puppet to substitute a new one for another

defunct; and the old one had to be content with the second rank. Life asserted itself. Every day would bring new impressions, sad and agreeable, older events were forgotten, and memories of that kind have disappeared without a trace in the dark of the past, along with the memory of men.

24: Wrangell--30-31 G-3 (1820-23) 1842 Yakut
116, 322, 437, 532

"At the annual fair of Jakuzk one sees none of the popular amusements common at fairs in Europe: there is not even the appearance of animation and bustle which might naturally be expected. The goods are not openly exposed for sale, and most of the purchases are effected in the houses or enclosures of the citizens. The strangers generally seek to [31] conceal from each other the particulars of their dealings, which are almost exclusively with the inhabitants, they scarcely ever having any transactions with one another. Almost all the Russian settlers in Jakuzk employ their little capital in purchasing, in small parcels from the Jakuti during the winter, a collection of furs, on which they realize a good profit at the fair. The Russians live entirely by trade, having abandoned all sorts of handicraft to the aboriginal Jakuti, among whom there are now excellent carpenters, cabinet-makers, carvers in wood, and even painters. The pictures of saints, and the carving and interior fittings in the new church at Jakuzk, are all by Jakuti, and are neatly executed."

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

415 Neither in the engraving and carving on the wooden kumiss
532 vessels, nor in the embroidery on the leather and birch-bark
778 vessels, do we find any realistic representation of animals or
756 objects. Realistic art was evidently not known to the Yakut in
322 the past. SĂROSHEVSKI remarks that the old-time Yakut considered it a sin for any one except shamans to carve human figures from wood. The shamans carve these roughly of wood, which represent "guardians" or evil spirits, for use in religious ceremonies, and they are not regarded as harmless to ordinary
[524] folk. I saw figures of cows and horses carved from wood or birch-bark, to be used by children as playthings, but there were never any dolls among them. Some Yakut living not far from
[321] the Russian town of Yakutsk carve from ivory, among other things human figures; but I consider this to be a rather inartistic imitation of the carvings of neighboring tribes.

415 The only attempt at realistic reproduction in the ornamenta-
531 tion of kumiss vessels is to be found in the carving of horses'
532 hoofs. Thus the feet of the three-legged goblets are often carved in the shape of horses' hoofs (Plate XXII, Fig. 2). The mouthpiece of the kumiss churning-vessel likewise often has the form of a horse's hoof. Even in a conventionalized form we do not find the representation of an animal or human figure, not even that of the horse, which forms an object of their animal cult; but, judging from the Yakut names, we do meet with conventionalized representations of parts of the human body.

Thus No. 13 (Fig. 8) is called *tonohos oyū*, that is, "vertebral ornament," and represents the spine or neck vertebra.

No. 15 is called *tyñyrax oyū*, which means "nail-ornament," and represents human nails.

No. 16 is called *tarbax oyū*, which is "finger-ornament," and is a conventionalization of the human finger. On birch-bark vessels we find the same ornament embroidered in horsehair (Plate XXII, Fig. 4), and it is then called *tarbaxtȳ ṭigī*, which means "finger-embroidery."

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

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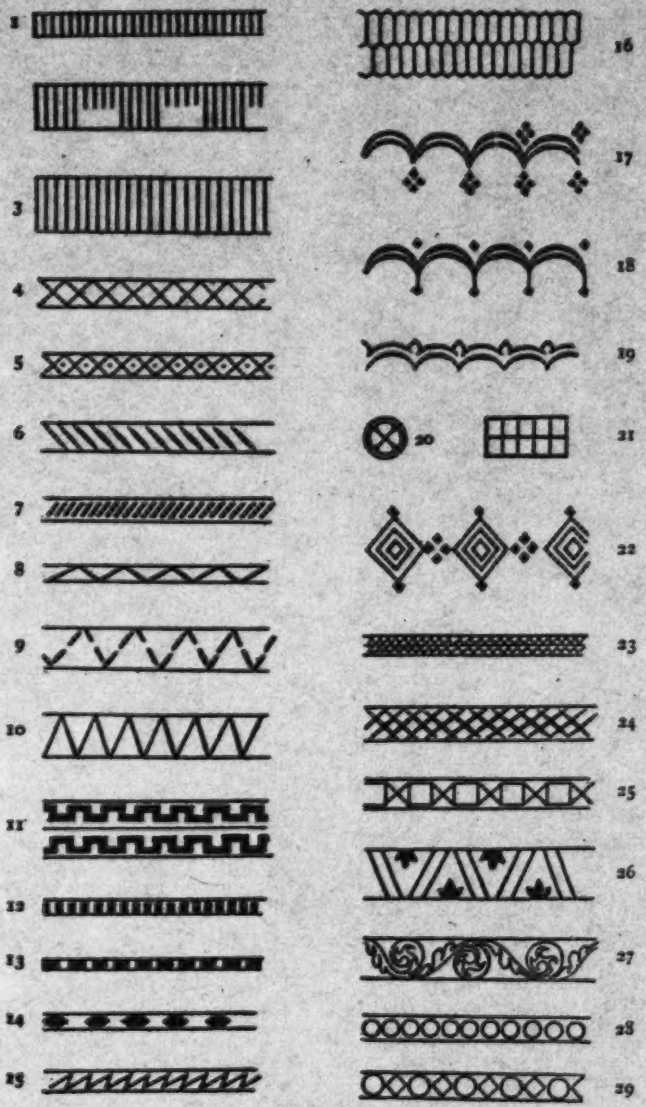

FIG. 2. YAKUT DESIGNS.

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

415 323 It is likely that the "nail" and the "finger" ornaments originated from the Yakut pottery-work, which is still preserved in a very primitive form.[1]

531 532 No. 21 is an ornament copied by me from a Yakut clay pot, and is called *tyñyraxmāx torduya*, which means "nail-raising." But this pattern is impressed in the soft clay, not with the nail, but with a wooden stamp named *kūōs oyūlūr mas*, meaning "a stick [*mas*] for the ornamentation of clay pots [*kūōs*]."

No. 20 is also stamped on clay pots, and is called *būltāghir torduya*, which means "rounded raising," but this pattern is also found on kumiss vessels.

There can also be found on kumiss vessels a pattern, not here illustrated, called *tañalai oyū* ("palate-ornament"). It consists of small curves which represent the arch of the palate.

Nos. 17–19 are often seen engraved in or embroidered on kumiss vessels. They are called *sarbyn'n'ax oyū* ("hanging ornament"). This pattern is made with the concave face turned either downwards or upwards. In the first case it represents the hanging arch of the sky; in the second, a rope hung up by the two ends. In a form similar to the latter it is also found on the clay pots of the neolithic age of western Europe, and was named *Schnurgehänge* by the German archæologists, which name coincides with the Yakut one.

415 531 The decorative work on the kumiss goblets is usually made by engraving the patterns on the even surface of the vessel. But we also find patterns carved in relief; for instance, the net-ornament mentioned before is in relief on the goblets on Plate XXI. Some patterns made in relief (see Nos. 11, 12, Fig. 8) have a common name, *tomtorgo oyū*, which means simply "relief ornaments," and which refers only to the style of carving, and not to the meaning of the pattern.

[177] Nos. 26, 27, which include conventionalized plants, are called *usuor oyū*. The word *usuor* is borrowed from the Russian word *uzor* (in Polish *wzor*), which means "pattern." The patterns too are evidently borrowed from Russian decorative motives.

[1] A short description of Yakut pottery will be given in my work on the Koryak (Jesup Expedition Publications, Vol. VI).

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

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Wooden toys: 1—ox, 2—cow; 3—horse.

771 the toyons, were zealous Christians. Actually, this is understandable, since Christianity was far better suited than shamanism to satisfying the class interests of the rich people. Nevertheless, the old, pre-Christian religion did not entirely disappear, and the older beliefs, although somewhat modified through the influence of Christian ideas, still kept their hold; and the shamans, the ministers of the old cult, still enjoyed authority, although they were forced to some extent to conceal their activities from the tsarist administrators and Orthodox clergy. Shamanism and the animistic beliefs associated with it seem to have been the most persistent element of the old Yakut religion.

756 The Yakut shamanism was closest of all to the Tungus type. The
171 Yakut shaman tambourine (wide-rimmed and oval) was exactly the same as the Tungus tambourine; the costume was also the Tungus type, except that the Yakut shamans officiated with uncovered heads. The similarity involved more than just their outward appearance; it also showed up in the more important details of the beliefs and rituals.

756 The Yakut shaman (oyuun) was considered the professional attendant of the spirits. According to Yakut belief, anyone chosen by the spirits to serve them could become a shaman, but the shamans were usually from the same families: "in a clan where a shaman has once appeared, he does not pass away," said the Yakuts. Apart from men shamans, there were also women shamans (*ydagan*), who were considered to be
[753] even more powerful. A sign of readiness to adopt the profession of shaman was a nervous ailment, which was interpreted as evidence that the person had been "elected" by the spirits; this was followed by a period of training under the guidance of an old shaman, and finally by a ritual public consecration.

756 It was thought that the spirit electing the shaman became his patron
776 spirit (emeget), and that it was the soul of an important shaman who had died earlier. Its image in the form of a flat copper effigy was worn among the other pendants with the shaman costume; the image was also called an emeget. The patron spirit imbues the shaman with strength and knowledge. The shaman sees and hears only through his emeget. Besides the latter, every shaman has his own animal double (iye-kyyl, "mother beast") in the form of an invisible eagle, stallion, bull, bear and so on. Finally, besides these personal spirits, every shaman was associated with a number of other spirits in human or bestial form when casting his spells. The different categories of spirits associated with the shaman's activity had their own specific names.

[753] The most important and largest group of spirits were the abaahy (or abaasy), devouring spirits to whose activity certain diseases were attributed.

The Yakuts are very fond of eloquence. The ability to make a good speech at a meeting is highly regarded, and the speaker is greeted with cries of approval. 537

With regard to the songs (yrya), the melodies are simple and monotonous, but there are different genres, and the images are often artistic. It is possible to sing love songs (for girls and boys), dance songs, humorous songs, shaman songs, and so on, as well as improvisations, when a person tells in song what he has been doing or seeing. The motif of this kind of song is very simple and usually consists of two or three repeated notes. 533

The Yakuts did not have any other kind of music, apart from vocal. There were no musical instruments, leaving aside the shaman tambourine and the khomus, a small iron jew's-harp known to more or less all the peoples of the Old World. [534]

The dances of the Yakuts are very original. Particularly interesting is a round called the *ohyoxan*, performed during festivals. 535

The dancers stand in a circle arm in arm and in time to the singing move with majestic steps to the left, in the direction of movement of the sun. There were variations of this dance in different localities. There were also various dancing games.

Ornamental art attained a high level of development among the Yakuts. The carving of wood and mammoth ivory; the casting and stamping of silver, copper and gold; the embroidery and appliqué of leather and fabric; fur appliqué and mosaic; the weaving of horsehair: all these were arts performed with materials available to the Yakuts and in which the craftsmen showed particular artistic taste and skill. Basically there was no graphic art for other than decorative purposes among the Yakuts, just as in the folk art of the past as a whole, if we disregard the animal, and human figures made by the shamans, and the later carved sculpture made in imitation of Russian examples. 531 532

The style of the Yakut design was original, although it contained Tungus, Mongol and other elements. Geometric motifs predominated, at times rather intricate ones. On the carved wooden vessels we find circular designs consisting of straight, serrated and wavy lines with points, dashes and so on, covering almost the entire surface. In the stamping, casting and birchbark carving, there predominate symmetrical, rounded figures, such as hooks, meanders, pincer-shapes, and so on, with linear squares, concentric circles and so forth. Very typical is a design found on scoops and saddlecloths; here one is struck by the central two-horned lyre—a purely Yakut motif. 531

The darkening of silver, and the painting of wood and alder with a concoction of alder, were developed.

In the selection of colors, preference was shown for black, red and, to some extent yellow and blue. The same preference was shown in the selection of fabric of the appropriate color.

* * *

Such was the culture of the Yakut people up to the October Revolution. 175

Particularly important was the cultural assistance which the Yakuts obtained from the fraternal Russian people during the prerevolutionary years. In the 19th century it was mainly the political exiles, beginning with the Decembrists, who spread culture through Yakutiya. There were also other progressive Russian people who diffused the beginnings of a cultivated way of life among the Yakuts. In particular, they laid the foundations of the Yakut written language. 177 212

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

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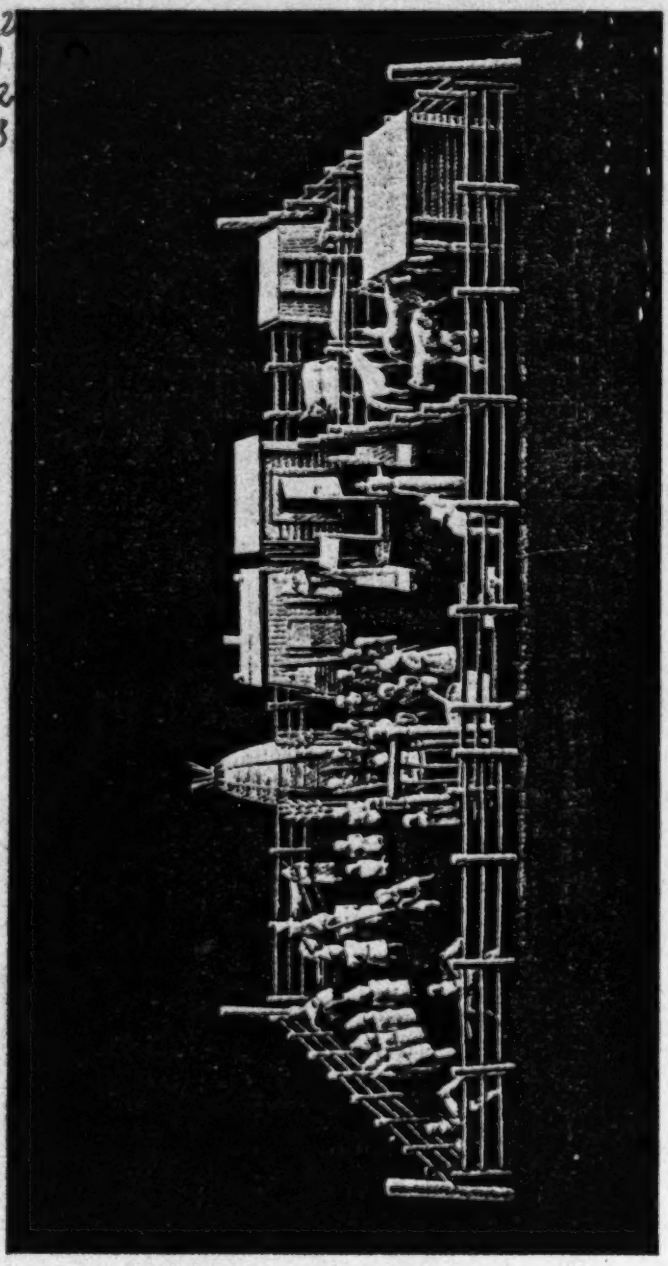

Yakut farmstead. Bone carving, 19th century.

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

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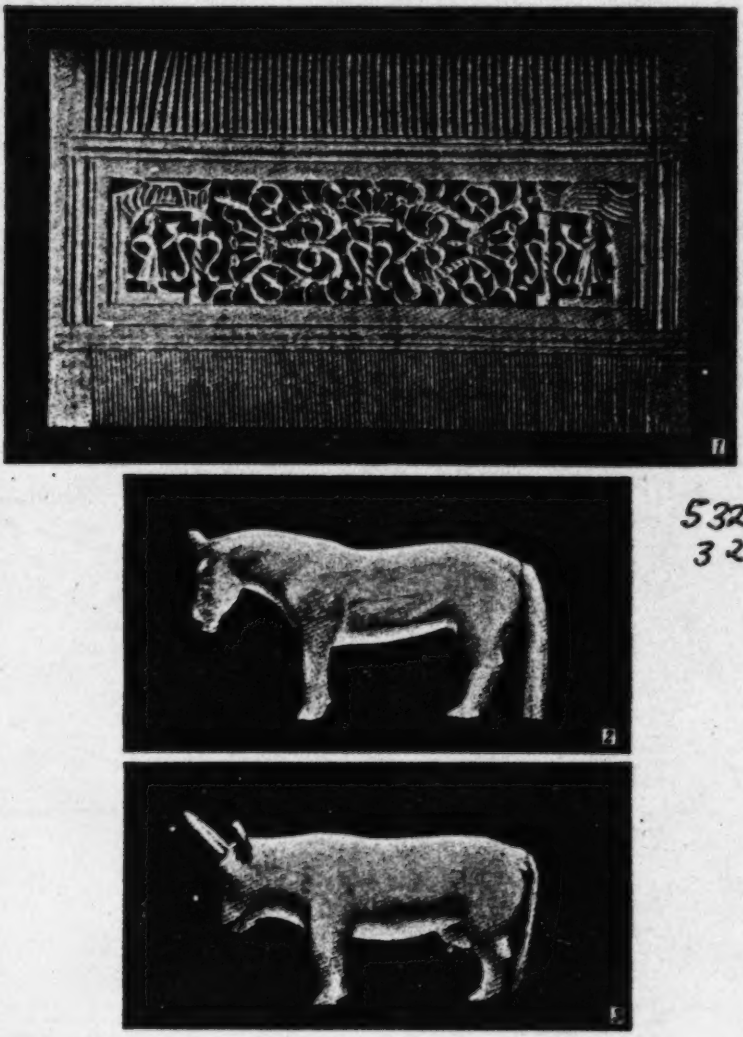

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Bone carving, 19th century. 1—comb; 2—horse; 3—cow.

foundations of the Yakut written language. Uvarovskiy, a Yakut by birth, wrote down several Yakut texts in Russian characters, and on the basis of them Academician O. N. Boethling made the first scholarly analysis of the Yakut language. At the prompting of the eminent I. Ye. Veniaminov (a former missionary in the Aleutians), the priest Dmitriy Khitrov published in 1958 the first "Brief Grammar of the Yakut Language." A

53: Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

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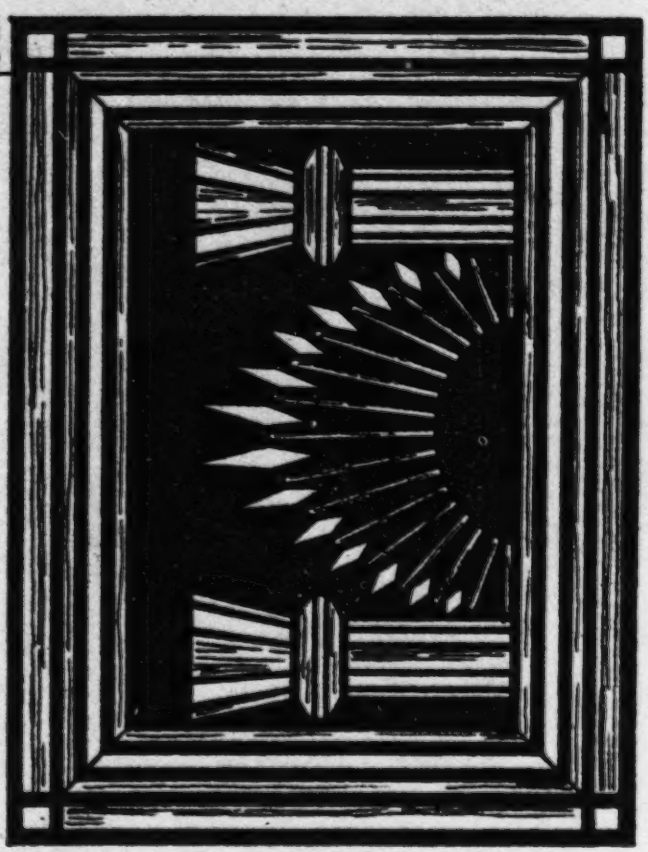

Appliqué made from straw and colored paper on lid of wooden box.

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

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Dance of girls with chorons (kumys pitchers). Amateur performance at collective farm.

Theatre

545 During the time of the Soviet regime a Yakut national art with new forms completely unknown in Yakutiya in the pre-Revolutionary period has blossomed. Before the Revolution Yakuts did not know about the theatre, and music and singing were only found in their most primitive form. In 1925 members of the drama group attached to the People's Russian Theatre in Yakutsk was formed into the Yakut National Troupe, and in 1930 a Yakut [536] National Theatre Studio was set up. From the very first years of its existence the actors set themselves the task of a realistic portrayal of Yakut life, denunciation of the merchants and toyons, and demonstration [87] of the greatness of the Socialist Revolution. The theatre gradually attracted young Yakut actors and actresses who had graduated from the Central Theatre School and Studios. They performed works by Soviet-Yakut dramatists with great success.

Art

● 532 For centuries Yakutiya has been known for its applied ornamental art, but professional artists only began to appear in the last quarter of the 19th century.

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

Bone-carving is the ancient art of the Yakuts. Bone-carving, wood-cutting and embossing silver still exist at the present time. Bone is widely used for bas-relief portraits. 532 321